

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

2017-2018 SHIP Application December 2016

1. Hospital and Rural Eligibility

Which hospitals are eligible and how do hospitals qualify as rural? Eligible for-profit or not-for-profit, small rural hospitals are non-federal, short-term general acute care facilities located in rural Texas areas. Hospitals can qualify as rural, even though they are not in non-Metro counties or eligible Census Tracts, by being designated as rural, either by statute or regulation by the State government. All critical access hospitals (CAHs) are rural by definition and qualify for SHIP. For hospitals that are not designated as critical access hospitals, a helpful website to determine rural eligibility is: <https://datawarehouse.hrsa.gov/tools/analyzers/geo/Rural.aspx>. (Be sure to check the rural eligibility by the physical address of the hospital.)

2. HCAHPS Questions

- a. Can SHIP funds be spent on an HCHAPS vendor? Yes, because many hospitals cannot afford the costs of HCAHPS without SHIP and because it is part of quality improvement.
- b. What does a hospital need to do to get our HCAHPS scores displayed on Hospital Compare? If a hospital is using a vendor for HCAHPS, the vendor should be able to walk the hospital through the process of ensuring all the necessary pieces are in place to allow data to appear on Hospital Compare. This will include at a minimum completing a vendor authorization and the Hospital Inpatient Quality Reporting Notice of Participation, both through QualityNet.
- c. What if a hospital has completed the necessary steps to allow for our HCHAPS data to appear on Hospital Compare, but due to low volumes, the data is suppressed? Is the hospital allowed to choose a different investment activity from the SHIP Purchasing Menu? Yes, so long as the hospital has taken all the necessary steps to allow for HCAHPS data to appear on Hospital Compare, the hospital is allowed to select a different investment from the SHIP Purchasing Menu.

3. Number of Hospital Beds

- a. What is an eligible number of SHIP beds? An eligible hospital has 49 available beds or less, as reported on the hospital's more recently filed Medicare Cost Report. **NOTE: If a hospital reports a licensed bed count greater than 49 on Line 14 of the report, but staffs 49 beds or fewer, eligibility may be certified by submitting a written statement to the SORH that includes; 1.) the number of staffed beds at the time of the most recent cost report submission, 2.) the cost reporting period of the most recently filed cost report and 3.) the signature of the certifying official.**
- b. Can SHIP hospitals, affiliated with a large health system and who no longer file cost reports, attest that they are still operation with 49 beds or less? Yes, they can attest to the number of beds from hospital administrator.

4. SHIP Funds and Nursing Homes/ Home Health

- a. Is it possible to use SHIP funds on something related to a nursing home or home health project? No. SHIP funds are to be used for the hospital specifically; page 2 of the FOA defines eligibility as being a hospital.

5. What type of comments should be provided in the comment box relating to the progress of the SHIP FY16 funded project?

By this time of the project period, most hospitals will select “In Progress” or “Completed”. If the SHIP project is in progress, comments stating that the SHIP project will be completed by the project end date of March 31, 2017 would be used. For SHIP projects that are completed and submitted the SHIP Project Completion Report, provide quantitative and qualitative data as part of the impact and/or measurable outcome for the project. (Ex.: With the purchase of the sleep apnea diagnosis unit, our hospital has had 14 patients use the unit. This SHIP funded equipment has improved the quality of care we provide our patients and has reduced travel time and expenses for our sleep apnea patients.)

6. SHIP Funds and Systems Performing Training

- a. **What are examples of systems performance training?** Hospitals that are interested in systems performance training may want to consider adopting a framework approach, such as one of the following: Baldrige, Balanced Score Card, & Logic Model.

7. SHIP Grant Application, Section F

- a. **What type of information is needed for Section F?** *“If your hospital received SHIP funds in FY16, (June 1, 2016 – May 31, 2017, did the hospital expend over 90% of the funds?”* If your hospital has completed the SHIP project and received an approval from the Texas State Office of Rural Health for the hospital’s SHIP Project Completion Report for reimbursement of at least \$7,523 (90% of \$8,358), then the answer is “YES”. If your SHIP project is in progress, then the answer is “NO.” If your hospital did not receive funding in FY16, answer accordingly.
- b. **The application asks if the applicant hospital is participating in various Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) programs. Where can I find out more about these programs?**
- i. Medicare Shared Savings Program – <https://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Medicare-Fee-for-Service-Payment/sharedsavingsprogram/index.html?redirect=/sharedsavingsprogram>
 - ii. Pioneer Accountable Care Organization Model – <https://innovation.cms.gov/initiatives/Pioneer-aco-model/>
 - iii. Hospital Inpatient Quality Reporting Program – <https://www.cms.gov/medicare/quality-initiatives-patient-assessment-instruments/hospitalqualityinits/hospitalrhqdapu.html>
 - iv. Hospital Compare – <https://www.cms.gov/medicare/quality-initiatives-patient-assessment-instruments/hospitalqualityinits/hospitalcompare.html>
- c. **What type of comments should be entered as recommendations for SHIP?** **NOTE: This is a very important part of the application. These comments assist the staff at the Federal Office of Rural Health Policy to structure the SHIP program to better serve hospitals. For example, if the hospital would like to have a certain item/s on the SHIP purchasing menu that is not listed; it should be noted in this section. Recommendations can also be made to the Texas State Office of Rural Health to help our office better serve the rural hospitals of Texas.**

8. Miscellaneous

- a. **Where should I submit the SHIP application?** The 2017-2018 SHIP Application is an online submission found on the SORH SHIP website.
- b. **Is the SHIP grant a competitive application?** The SHIP grant is not a competitive application. As long as the hospital is eligible, the application will be accepted.
- c. **Do hospitals have to allocate 100% of funds to one category?**
No, hospitals may split funding between different SHIP Purchasing Menu categories.

- d. **Can SHIP funds be used for travel and hospital staff salaries?** No, SHIP funds may not be used for travel or hospital staff salaries.
- e. **If a hospital has SHIP money left over after completing chosen activity (ies), can the hospital spend that money on another activity from the SHIP purchasing menu?**
It is vitally important that hospitals utilize all of their SHIP funding. Hospitals that have realized a cost savings can utilize those funds in other activities on the SHIP purchase investment menu. However, the applicant must submit a budget modification for approval by the State Office of Rural Health SHIP Coordinator before those funds are used.
- f. **Is it possible for hospitals to pool SHIP funds on a shared activity?**
Yes, pooling SHIP funds amongst hospitals is a great way to make efficient use of resources. The State Office of Rural Health must be aware in establishing any such projects.